being undertaken through private funding;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) when the work on gauge conversion of Dharangradhra Kuda will be taken up and what time will be taken in its completion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Dharangradhra-Kuda line is being converted on cost-sharing basis between Railway, Ministry of Industry and State Govt. Railway has provided its full share of funds in 1998-99 budget. Work will be started as soon as co-sharers comeforth with their share of funds.

Harassment of Reservation Ticket Holders

1179. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the railway reservations are rapidly becoming meaningless inasmuch as the passengers without reservation come and occupy the reserved seats and even after repeated entreaties refuse to vacate them causing great harassment to those having reservation tickets; and

(b) if so, whether Government will issue strict instructions to the conductors attached to the reserved bogies to stop, if necessary with police help, the non-reservation ticket holders from entering into such bogies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Some instances of entering of unauthorised passengers in reserved coaches and occupying the reserved berths of the bonafide passengers have come to notice during busy seasons like summer rush, Pooja holidays etc.

(b) Instructions already exist and have since been reiterated further to the railways to conduct surprise checks with the help of GRP/RPF and the persons found travelling unauthorisedly be dealt with under the provisions of Railways Act, 1989.

Operation of Rajdhani Express to Thiruvananthapuram by Delhi staff

1180. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Rajdhani Express to Thiruvananthapuram is operating by the staff from Delhi;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the reasons for not allowing the staff from Thiruvananthapuram Division to operate one of the Rajdhani Expresses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) In order to ensure uniformity, Rajdhani Express trains are manned by the staff of the railway which is responsible for the primary maintenance of the train and Northern Railway being such railway, in this case, its staff man this train.

Complaints About Ageing Coaches

1181. SHRIMATI CHANDRAKALA PANDEY:
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of complaints from passengers in Eastern, South Eastern and North East Frontier Railways about the use of ageing coaches without requisite amenities;

(b) if so, the action plan to replace these coaches, zone-wise; and

(c) if not, the comparative statistics of the average age of coaches in all the zones of Indian Railways?